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## DECEMBER MEETING, 1885.

The Society held its regular meeting on the 10th instant, the Rev. Dr. ELLIS, the President, in the chair.

The Secretary's report of the previous meeting was read.

The Librarian's list of gifts to the Library was submitted; and among them were about a hundred volumes which had been received from the President.

Dr. ELLIS then said:—

The death at Cambridge yesterday, after a completed life of fourscore years, of our associate John Langdon Sibley, Librarian Emeritus of Harvard College, has been long expected, and perhaps would have been earlier welcomed by himself and his friends as a release from protracted infirmities. His name has been upon our roll for thirty-nine years. He was one of those intelligent workers in the fields of historical and biographical studies, for whom such a Society as this exists, who use its stores and enrich its productions. He had all the special qualities which are most requisite and most fruitful in his and our appropriate pursuits,—curiosity, interest, and sympathy with the subjects of his studies; extended, thorough, and patient research, carried into obscure and minute details; and a conscientious respect for accuracy. He was impartial, candid, and generous in his judgments. We have all of us identified him with the College. It might well be so, for it was his own appropriation of his life and service. He was one of those marked personalities, in aspect, garb, and bearing, which fit and grace a college or university, as certifying to its age, its historical and traditional type of character and of service. All ancient institutions of learning gather during the years such congruous personalities, in their officers and servants,—like the famous Tutor Flynt, of the elder generations of Harvard, and the quaint Grecians, Popkin and Sophocles, of more recent times.

With the exception of a few of the early years of his manhood spent in the ministry, Mr. Sibley had through his long

life found his field and its centre in the Library of his Alma Mater ; and his "Library was dukedom large enough." It was not strange that in his later years his vision was impaired ; neither was it strange that he should renew it through surgical help, for further poring over ancient and crabbed manuscripts. His labors upon those most engaging of periodicals to the lovers of ancient Harvard, — the "Latin Catalogues," — and his revivification in three noble volumes of the far-off Graduates of the College in its years of penury, frugality, and stern fidelity, have crowned for perpetual memory his useful and blameless life.

Judge HOAR paid an eloquent tribute to Mr. Sibley, and spoke with high appreciation of his generous gift to Phillips Exeter Academy for the benefit of poor boys, and of his persistent effort through life to advance what was associated with the tender memories of childhood and youth.

Dr. PAIGE expressed his sense of personal loss in the death of one with whom he had been most intimately associated, and who had assisted him to the utmost in preparing his History of Cambridge.

The customary resolutions were adopted ; and Dr. Peabody was appointed to prepare a memoir of Mr. Sibley.

Mr. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL presented to the Society an autograph letter of Burns to Miss Benson, afterwards the mother of Mrs. Bryan Waller Procter, who gave it to him. Mrs. Procter's own maiden name was Shepper ; and, through her father, she was descended from that Scheffer who disputes with Faust and Gutenberg the invention of printing. Her mother married, as her second husband, Mr. Basil Montagu, and her own husband was known in literature as Barry Cornwall. Since the death of Miss Mary Berry, there has been no personage more marked in London society than she. Born with the century, there is hardly any celebrated person of the last sixty years, except Byron, whom she has not known. With most of them she has been on terms of friendship, and with many of intimacy. Her conversation is delightful, not only for its wealth of anecdote and reminiscence, but for its unfailing wit and its sprightly shrewdness in the delineation of character. The letter should be considered as a gift from her to the Society. Mr. Lowell added that he had not been

unmindful of the Society while abroad. It was at his personal suggestion that the Conde de Torenó sent to the Library the superb volume of "*Cartas de Indias*."

The letter of the Scottish poet, which is framed and carefully preserved between plates of glass, was examined with much interest by the members; and it was voted that the grateful acknowledgments of the Society be given to Mr. Lowell, and communicated by the Secretary to Mrs. Procter for this choice gift.

Mr. APPLETON spoke of a portrait of Washington now on exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in this city, and similar to the picture of which a copy belongs to the Society. It is one of the group of repetitions painted by Charles Wilson Peale, and adds one to the list recorded in our Proceedings for November, 1874. It was owned by Elias Boudinot, well known in our history, is now the property of his descendant, Miss Boudinot, and is offered for sale at the price of \$6,000. It is somewhat smaller than all the others, so far as known, and is perhaps more likely than they to have been painted from life.

The PRESIDENT then spoke of a picture in water-color representing the landing of the British troops here in 1768, and dedicated by "C. R." to John Hancock, which was owned in Maine and had been offered for sale.

Mr. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, Jr., communicated the following letter to Governor John Winthrop, of Massachusetts, from Henry Boade, one of the leading settlers of Maine. The Society has already printed a letter of his in Part III. of the Winthrop Papers;<sup>1</sup> but this one, though belonging to the same collection, had been wrongly indexed, and has only recently been identified. Like its predecessor, it is indorsed by Governor Winthrop "*Cosin Boade*;" and the precise degree of this cousinship has hitherto been a puzzle. Dr. C. E. Banks, U. S. N., the author of several valuable contributions to the early history of Maine, has now pointed out that Thomasine Hilles, wife of John Forth, of Great Stambridge, in Essex (the father of Governor Winthrop's first wife), had previously been the widow of one Thomas Boade, of Rochford, in Essex. There is good reason to suppose Henry Boade to have been a

<sup>1</sup> 5 Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. i. p. 358.

nephew of this Thomas Boade, and thus a sort of step-cousin by marriage to the Governor. The "Mr. Adam" mentioned in the letter is obviously the Governor's son of that name.

*Henry Boade to Gov<sup>r</sup> John Winthrop. 1648.*

To the right wo<sup>r</sup>shipfull & my assured friend M<sup>r</sup> John Winthrop, Governor of Massachusetts, this present.

RIGHT WO<sup>r</sup>SHIPFULL: My best respects remembred etc. These are to give you thanks for your counsell in those things I desyered. I desyere to know whether a letter of attorney from the whole towne exepcting 2 or 3 y<sup>t</sup> are ingaged to the ptie sued be not sufficient to prosecut for the towne.

I am very sorry y<sup>t</sup> I could not doe y<sup>t</sup> in M<sup>r</sup> Adam's busynes as I desytyned. I went presently before I came to mine owne house to demand the cattle for his debt, and they were then under an arest at the sute of Thomas Mercer for a debt due to him from John Lee. I spake with M<sup>r</sup> Cleaves himselfe about the busynes and his answer was in regard the cattle were not delivered for the use of M<sup>r</sup> Adam, notwithstanding his ingagement yet they were loyable to any debt of John Lee's. We doe still rely upon your wo<sup>r</sup>shipec to helpe us in the Maine, in y<sup>t</sup> one thinge necessary the meanes of grace, it would much rejoyce ou<sup>r</sup> harts to receive a comfortable letter from your wo<sup>r</sup>shipp to this end.

M<sup>r</sup> Cleaves hath measured his 40 miles and hath beene w<sup>th</sup> me at Wells & saith his line reacheth us to be w<sup>th</sup>in his pattent of Legaonia, for the w<sup>th</sup> we are very sorry, for we intended to joyne ou<sup>r</sup>selves to the government of Massacheusetts bay. If it might be we hope yet upon a second survey to find ou<sup>r</sup>selves w<sup>th</sup>out his line. It is the vote of the most that he cannot come neere us if he begin to take his measure according to his pattent w<sup>th</sup> is at Sakado-hec river the South west syd of yt; but he began at M<sup>r</sup> Purchas's house at the river called Mengipscott river, and sett one to measure that hath neither art nor skill for to doe such a busynes. He measured and came short of our towne 3 miles; there was one told him he would give him a quart of sakk to measure in such a man John Wadloe who dwelleth in y<sup>e</sup> middell part of ou<sup>r</sup> towne; he goeth back againe & then he reacheth all ou<sup>r</sup> towne only 2 houses. When he was w<sup>th</sup> us he shewed his power under M<sup>r</sup> Riggbey over all that are w<sup>th</sup>in his regiment, as also wa<sup>r</sup>ants y<sup>t</sup> he had received from your wo<sup>r</sup>shipec and other of y<sup>e</sup> assistants for the ayding of him in his proceedings, and w<sup>th</sup>all demanded our submission. This was but 18 dayes before his village court; our answer was this, that we were sett into ou<sup>r</sup> possessions first by M<sup>r</sup> Craddock's agent who bought y<sup>e</sup> pattent of Stratten, secondly by M<sup>r</sup> Thomas Gorges. We desyred of him he would give us some time to consyder of yt, the matter being of waight,

that we may have good grounds for what we doe, but he would not grant it unto us. We told him we would be at the charge of a second survey done by a sufficient artist and then yf we be found w<sup>th</sup> in his line willingly to submitt. But nothing will please him but ou<sup>r</sup> present submission upon his survey by his owne man Booth, and what he will doe w<sup>th</sup> us we knowe not, but we heare he doth purpose to complaine to you<sup>r</sup> wo<sup>r</sup>shi<sup>p</sup>e y<sup>t</sup> we are rebellious. But indeed there is noe such thinge, we are ready to submitt upon good grounds and sent a man to his village-court w<sup>th</sup> our answere and to see his pattent [torn] we are to begin to take our measure. [torn] answere is we could not see it, yt was gn for old England. Thus I thought good to lett you<sup>r</sup> wo<sup>r</sup>shi<sup>p</sup>e understand how things goe w<sup>th</sup> us here in y<sup>e</sup> east. And rest you<sup>s</sup> to be commanded,

HEN: BOAD.

WELLS, this 29<sup>th</sup> of  
Septber, 1648.

Mr. WINSOR presented some extracts from a family letter handed to him by Mr. C. W. Sever, of Cambridge, which relate to the burning of the Castle in Boston Harbor, in March, 1776, when the British evacuated the town, and which describe the consternation prevailing in Plymouth when Captain Manly was driven into that harbor by a British frigate in the same month. In the extracts some little carelessness in the spelling has been corrected.

[KINGSTON,] Saturday March 23.

MY DEAR, — . . . We were greatly surprised Wednesday evening by the appearance of a great light in the north, which many people thought could be occasioned by nothing less than the burning of the town of Boston. . . . I assure [you] it made a terrible appearance, but after a little reflection I was convinced it could not be the town, as the light, if that had been the case, would have been more extensive; but was at a loss to conceive what it could be. Could not think it possible it could be the Castle, but we since hear it is.

Thursday evening we had a new alarm, that the light-house and dwellings upon the Gurnet were in flames, upon which I looked out and discovered two large fires, which appeared exactly in the range of those buildings; supposed the enemy had landed and fired them, but comforted myself that if they had designed any further mischief they would not have begun by burning those buildings, as they must have been sensible it would give a universal alarm. Went to bed at my usual time tolerably well composed, but it was not so with our friends in Plymouth. Mrs. Otis drank coffee with me yesterday. She tells me they were in the utmost confusion there. It seems there were a

number of guns fired about the same time the fires were kindled (the guns we did not hear), which were both designed to give an alarm, but they supposed, as we did, that the buildings were on fire. They also supposed that the enemy fired the cannon, upon which they sent down a boat to see if they could discover the enemy. They soon returned with terrible accounts, that there were three or four large ships within the Gurnet, and that they were landing their men very fast, which threw the town into the utmost consternation. They kindled a fire on the burying hill, and despatched messengers to all the towns around, even as far as Wareham and Middleborough, to call in the militia; sent off many of their women and children, and as much furniture as they could get away. Mrs. Otis tells me they had their chairs at the door and cloaks on from half past ten till half after four, ready to fly in a moment. . . . In the morning to their great joy [they] found that the fleet which had thrown them into such a panic was Captain Manly with four other privateers, who were driven into the harbor by a large man-of-war, — and so ended this mighty affair.

Mrs. Thomas requests the favor that you would just call at a goldsmith near Mr. Hull (?), — she has forgot the name, — and take a pair of silver buckles, which the General left there to be mended, and that you would pay him for the mending them, and also for a pair of spectacle-bows [which] the General had of him. She also begs you to inclose her newspaper with your own. I have been to visit her [and] find her very dull. . . . My compliments to our friends at Watertown. I hope to see you next week; till then adieu.

Yours affectionately,

SARAH SEVER.

General John Thomas, it will be remembered, had led the force which, by the occupation of Dorchester Heights, had caused the evacuation of Boston, March 17; and he had probably started on his way to join the army in Canada, without attending to the little business his wife was now anxious to complete. Dr. Thacher, in his "History of Plymouth" (p. 214) makes brief mention of the fright on Manly's coming.

Dr. GEORGE H. MOORE, of New York, being called upon by the President, presented and read the following communication: —

The approach of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus revives universal interest in the history of the man and the event. Already the keynote of preparation has been sounded more or less

distinctly from many points of direction, and the busy hum of preparation begins to grow on the ear.

Whether or not that great Christian Church of which he was an enthusiastic devotee will inscribe his name among the saints on her crowded calendar may yet be doubtful, but that she will become more and more proud of his achievement under the banner of the renowned Catholic sovereigns of the Spanish Peninsula in the waning years of the fifteenth century is plainly written in the prophetic books of history. The claim has already been set up that is intended to vindicate the Roman Catholic countries and peoples of Europe against the just charge of gross and criminal neglect and indifference to the name and fame of one of the grandest of men among the sons of the Church.

But it is on the free and inspiring air of Protestantism, chiefly if not alone, that the trumpet of fame has rung out the great notes of celebration and honor to him among the generations of men who have filled the stage of human life since Christopher Columbus passed away from it in the cruel martyrdom of envy and neglect; and nowhere in the round world, or among them that dwell therein, have all the honors due to him been recognized or vindicated more fully and fairly than in the United States, where the first public celebrations of the discovery of America took place in 1792,<sup>1</sup> and a few years later the genius of the greatest master of the English language who has yet appeared in America was inspired to produce the best record of the life of the discoverer.

The name of Vespucci was written on the land of Columbus in 1507, within a year after his death. It appeared in the maps before 1521, where it has kept its place, and is likely to continue. I do not know that any considerable effort has ever been made to change it, although a sense of its injustice has haunted the minds of men in all these generations; but we are all familiar with a name which has grown into use in literature, especially poetry, as a substitute for the cumbrous descriptive political title with which the United States of America assumed a place among the nations of the earth.

<sup>1</sup> By the Tammany Society, or Columbian Order, in the city of New York, on the 12th of October; and by the Massachusetts Historical Society, in Boston, on the 23d of October.

The name is identified with the period of the Revolution and the years immediately following it; and when Joseph Hopkinson wrote his famous song, "Hail Columbia," he summed up the patriotic sentiment of nationality which had been steadily growing from the beginning of the War of Independence. It is creditable alike to the heads and the hearts of the people who achieved the independence of the United States that the name of *Columbia* took at once (as it were) so firm and lasting a hold upon their affections. The name of Columbus was thus revived in the new birth of Freedom, and has not ceased to be cherished to this day.

The earliest recognition in this part of the New World of the name of the discoverer as appropriate for the lands which he had discovered was by a famous man of New England,—Chief Justice Sewall. In his "*Phænomena Quædam Apocalyptica*," first published in 1697, and again in a second edition, 1727, he calls the country *Columbina*. At a later period he intimated the opinion, doubtless formed many years before, that "where (Tebel) World is mentioned in the Psalms, it is to be understood of the New World, *Columbina*."<sup>1</sup>

The source of Sewall's inspiration on this subject is plain enough from his record. Nicholas Fuller, one of the best Oriental scholars, and who has been chronicled as "the most admired critic of his time" (1557–1622), was one of the first, if not the first of the English nation, who has recorded a protest in favor of Columbus:—

"Indiam Occidentalem, quam passim *Americam* dicunt, verè ac meritò *Columbinam* potius dicerent, à magnanimo Heroe Christophoro Columbo Genuensi primo terrarum illarum investigatore atque inventore planè Divinitus Constituto."<sup>2</sup>

"These are the sentiments of Mr. *Nicholas Fuller* concerning the New World. . . . This learned Man, agreeable to his great Ingenuity, endeavours to do *Columbus* the Justice, as to eternize his Honour, by engraving his Name upon the World of his Discovery. *It is everywhere called America; but according to Truth and Desert, men should rather*

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 2, 1725: Diary, vol. iii. p. 367. Compare Jan. 1, 1710, in vol. ii. p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellanea Sacra*, lib. ii. cap. iv. Crit. Sac. ix. 2281, 63–67. Lond. 1660. Compare Poole's Synopsis, v. 1994, 31: "Fullerus noster in Misc. 2, 4 in fine probare Nationes Americanæ sint Magogiticæ gentis coloniæ, ob brevem Oceani in Scythicis istis oris tractum."

*call it Columbina, from the magnanimous Heroe Christopher Columbus a Genuese, who was manifestly Appointed of GOD to be the Finder out of these Lands."*<sup>1</sup>

In these generous sentiments of the ancient Oxford scholar and critic, Sewall evidently agreed. The most emphatic illustration of his zealous interest in the name and fame of Columbus was given in the height of his courtship of Madam Winthrop in 1720, so graphically recorded in his Diary as printed by the Massachusetts Historical Society. October 11th he "writ a few Lines to Madam Winthrop," thanking her for her "unmerited Favours" of the day before, and hoping "to have the Happiness of Waiting on her" the next day "before Eight o'clock after Noon," concluding thus:—

"I pray God to keep you, and give you a joyfull entrance upon the *Two Hundred and Twenty Ninth year of Christopher Columbus his Discovery*: and Take Leave, who am, Madam, your humble Serv<sup>t</sup>  
"S. S."

Upon his following visit, as appointed, he found the fair widow's "Countenance much changed from what 't was on Monday, look'd dark and lowering;" and among other items which he records of that momentous interview, he appears to have found it necessary to "explain the expression Concerning Columbus."<sup>2</sup> He was sixty-nine and she was fifty-six years of age at this time. What the more or less lively widow thought about it is nowhere recorded among the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society, whose publication of these matters and the discussions to which they have led furnish us with very entertaining as well as instructive reading.

A few years after the publication of Sewall's second edition of the "Phænomena," the "Gentleman's Magazine" began its long and useful career. The reports of debates in Parliament were made a feature in this publication; and in their preparation Cave, the editor, was assisted by Mr. William Guthrie. Dr. Johnson had not yet entered upon his work as an editor or author of these debates, which his name and fame have since made so celebrated; but they aroused the wrath of the House of Commons, in which, on the 13th April, 1738, it was duly

<sup>1</sup> *Phænomena Apocalyptica*, 1697, pp. 46, 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Diary*, vol. iii. pp. 266, 267.

resolved, concerning the publication, "that it is a high indignity to, and notorious breach of, the privileges of this House . . . and that this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offenders." In this extremity, some expedient being necessary, Cave shrewdly prefaced the debates by what he chose to call "An Appendix to Captain Lemuel Gulliver's Account of the famous Empire of Lilliput;" and the proceedings in Parliament were given as debates in the Senate of Lilliput, with feigned names and other disguises. In the very first number of these reports there is a significant reference to "their Conquests and Acquisitions in *Columbia* (which is the Lilliputian name for the country that answers our *America*)."<sup>1</sup> These Lilliputian disguises were continued beyond the period of Johnson's debates. So far as I have been able to find out, this Lilliputian name for the country answering to English America was the first appearance of "Columbia" anywhere.

But when and where did the name *Columbia* first appear in the land to which it justly belongs? Until an earlier date is found for it, I am disposed to claim the honor of its introduction for an inhabitant, though not a citizen, of Massachusetts, — a negro woman, a native of Africa, and a slave at the time, the property of a citizen of Boston. She was a poet of no mean capacity. At any rate, the volume which contains many of her writings is a poetical monument quite as considerable as could be shown for Massachusetts at the time, and second only to that of another female writer of that colony, — Mrs. Anne Bradstreet.

In October, 1775, Phillis Wheatley was inspired by the patriotic muse to address a poem of forty-two lines of heroic verse to General Washington, who a few weeks before had taken command of the American Army of the Revolution. In that poem, printed a few months afterwards in the "Pennsylvania Magazine" in Philadelphia, the name "Columbia" appears for the first time, so far as I know, on this continent.

If an earlier use of it by any writer here may yet be pointed out, still this negro slave woman must have the honor of having led in the van of the little army of poets who speedily after her date made the welkin ring with the echoes of "Columbia." I do not find that she had ever used it before in any of her

<sup>1</sup> Gentleman's Magazine, vol. viii. p. 285.

poems; but it appears more than once in one of her subsequent productions.

Timothy Dwight followed; but his spirited lyric —

“Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,  
The Queen of the World and the child of the skies,”

was not written until the latter part of the year 1777, or perhaps later. His chaplaincy at West Point began in October of that year. In his “Conquest of Canaan,” the name appears several times, of which the first is in the ninety-second line of the first book, concluding his sympathetic tribute to the memory of Nathan Hale: —

“And sad Columbia wept his hapless doom.”

It was, however, the Tyrtæus of America, the New York Huguenot poet of the Revolution, Philip Freneau, who gave the greatest impulse to the new name of *Columbia*. In his “Dialogue between His Britannic Majesty and Mr. Fox, supposed to have passed about the time of the approach of the Combined Fleets of France and Spain to the British Coasts, August, 1779,” first published in the “United States Magazine” at Philadelphia in December, 1779, he repeats the word many times very effectively: —

“How shall I make Columbia yet my friend?”

“How vain is Britain’s strength! her armies now  
Before Columbia’s bolder veterans bow.”

“And we no more for lost Columbia mourn.”

“Columbia, thou a friend in better times,  
Lost are to me thy pleasurable climes.”

“Of all the isles, the realms with which I part,  
Columbia sits the heaviest at my heart.”

“Withdraw your armies from the Americ’ shore,  
And vex Columbia with your fleets no more.”

“Since Heaven has doomed Columbia to be free.”

He emphasizes the novelty of the name by his note subjoined to the first line in which he uses it, informing the reader that America is “so called by poetical liberty, from its discoverer.” His view of the matter is more fully illustrated in

his "Sketches of American History" written in 1785. The lines which I quote are certainly better history than poetry:—

"Good fortune, *Vespucius*, pronounced thee her own,  
Or else to mankind thou hadst scarcely been known—  
By giving thy name, thou art ever renowned—  
Thy *name* to a world that another had found.  
COLUMBIA the name was that Merit decreed,  
But Fortune and Merit have never agreed—  
*Yet the poets, alone, with commendable care,*  
*Are vainly attempting the wrong to repair."*

It is unnecessary to pursue the topic much further. The name was speedily associated with many objects and subjects, natural, civil, and political, as well as literary. The first time it appeared in legislation was in the law of the State of New York giving the name of Columbia to King's College in 1784. Two years later (April 4, 1786), a new county was set off from Albany County, and established with the name of Columbia County. Since that time the name is legion, scattered throughout the land—

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa."

The Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP alluded to a note which he had received in reference to an elaborate picture of Niagara Falls, which represented it as it was sixty-two years ago. The writer of the note wished to dispose of the picture, which had been painted on canvas in oil by his father; but Mr. Winthrop thought that it ought to be purchased by the State of New York, which now had charge of that region, or, better still, that a museum should be established in connection with the Niagara Falls Park, and that this, together with all other views illustrating the same subject, should be deposited there for all coming time.

Mr. JENKS said:—

I have here a photograph presented to this Society at its last meeting, which I think you will agree with me deserves more notice than the mere mention of the donor's name; and perhaps some here will be glad to have their attention called to it, and to take the opportunity to look at it, for it

is a representation of the flag under which the minute-men of Bedford marched to Concord fight.

It is of red silk, about two feet square, not far (as nearly as I can remember from having seen it borne in processions once or twice) from the size of, and in general appearance resembling, the celebrated Eutaw Springs flag, which is held with such pride and affection by the Washington Light Infantry Company of Charleston, South Carolina; and it seems a pleasing coincidence that there should be in existence, and carefully preserved, two flags of such a nature, — one borne in the first battle of the Revolution, and the other carried in one of its latest conflicts.

The device on the flag is a mailed hand, extended out of what appears to be intended for a cloud, and grasping a dagger or small sword. Three large silver balls are on different parts of the surface, and the whole is partially encircled by a scroll bearing the motto, "Vince aut morire."

Perhaps some of our members more familiar with heraldry may explain the significance of the bearings, and tell us more about this flag. It has been kept in the family of the Ensign John Page, who bore it to Concord, and on the 19th of October, of this year, was presented to the town of Bedford by his grandson, now in his eighty-fifth year.

The long staff to which it is attached shows plainly that it was a cavalry flag; and it is said to have been carried in the French and Indian war by a cavalry company, largely or entirely made up from this town, in which, I believe, the same Page had been ensign. When the minute-men were summoned to go to Concord, he came, and naturally brought with him the flag he had borne before; and under it they marched to the fight.

This flag and the event with which it is connected have a special interest for me, because the house before which the minute-men assembled, supposed to be the oldest now standing in the village of Bedford, had been opened some years before by my great-grandfather as a tavern, and has remained for over a hundred years in his family (in the same name of Fitch); and it is reported that Jonathan Wilson, their captain, having drawn them up in line, addressed them, saying, "Boys, we will give you a cold breakfast, but before night we will give the British a hot supper."



Wilson was killed in the Concord fight. His body was brought back to Bedford and buried in the old burying-ground. Whether there is any significance in it I cannot tell, but it is interesting in this connection to know that on his grave-stone is cut a hand holding a dagger similar to that on the flag. Perhaps it refers to his having been killed while fighting under it; perhaps there may have been in the device on the flag some personal reference. Further light upon the flag may also explain this.

Mr. E. J. LOWELL stated, in response to an inquiry by the President, that very few Hessian officers came over to our side during the Revolution; that a few soldiers did so, but they were mostly those who had been taken prisoners, and subsequently others who were about to return from America to Germany; but that Washington was especially averse to enlisting deserters.

Remarks were made by Dr. EVERETT, Mr. DEANE, and Mr. T. C. AMORY; and Mr. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL mentioned that John G. Saxe had declared that he was descended from a Hessian deserter.